

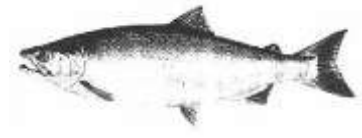
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #51

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, August 8 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. Waters within the Chinook salmon inside closure area will be OPEN during this commercial fishing period. The last day of sonar operation at Miles Lake for the 2013 season was July 27. The cumulative sonar count through July 27 was 1.27 million fish whereas the anticipated inriver passage range for this date is 695,308–1,067,794 fish. For the week ending August 10, the actual Copper River Delta survey index count was 50,875 versus an anticipated range of 24,976–59,034 sockeye salmon. The preliminary harvest estimate for the fishing period that closed Friday, August 2 was 500 sockeye, 12,800 pink, and 2,700 coho salmon with 17 deliveries reported. The cumulative Copper River District commercial harvest to date is 1.58 million sockeye salmon and 6,500 coho salmon.

The Copper River District is open to subsistence fishing concurrent with commercial fishing periods until closed at the end of the season. Subsistence permits may be obtained during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday - Friday, 8:00 am - 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm - 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.**

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, August 8 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. For the week ending August 10, the actual Bering River District survey index count was 12,650 versus a minimum anticipated range of 4,301–9,462 sockeye salmon. No harvest was reported for the commercial fishing period that closed Friday, August 2.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Main Bay Subdistrict will open to commercial gillnet fishing for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, August 8. The AGZ will open to DRIFT GILLNET permit holders only during this fishing period. There was no harvest reported from the period that closed Monday, August 5. Cumulative harvest through July 31 was 508,000 sockeye, 213,000 chum, 1,500 coho, and 57,000 pink salmon. Video monitoring of salmon escapement on the Eshamy River is currently operational and run entry into the lagoon and river will be assessed from the camp through the end of the week. Future openings will depend on pink salmon stream escapements and assessment of sockeye salmon run entry into Eshamy River.

SEINE FISHERIES: VFDA reports 500,000 to 600,000 pink salmon staged at SGH. VFDA's broodstock needs are approximately 346,000 pink salmon. Eggtakes are underway at SGH, with approximately 13% of the final goal completed through August 2, and 19% completed through August 5. PWSAC completed its pink salmon cost recovery program on July 31.

ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from the Northern District on August 3 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 34% female. ADF&G sampling of CPF harvest from the Northern District on August 4 resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 31% female. ADF&G sampling of pink salmon harvested in the Eastern, Coghill, and Southwestern districts on July 30 resulted in an average weight of approximately 2.8 pounds per fish. Final harvest numbers for the August 5 fishery in Prince William Sound are unavailable at the time of this announcement; however, it is estimated that at least 15.3 million pink salmon were harvested from August 1 through August 5 using this average weight. Cumulative pink salmon harvest totals for Prince William Sound through August 5 include approximately 1.8 million VFDA cost recovery fish, 1.7 million PWSAC cost recovery fish, and an estimated 49.4 million CPF fish.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the July 30 Northern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 88% hatchery and 12% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 125,000 pink salmon. Of the estimated 890,000 hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 76% WNH, 20% CCH, 2% AFK, and 2% SGH.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the July 30 Coghill District CPF result in a harvest composition of 88% hatchery and 12% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 50,300 pink salmon. Of the estimated 362,000 hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 94% WNH and 6% CCH.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the July 30 Southwestern District CPF result in a harvest composition of 75% hatchery and 25% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 403,000 pink salmon. Of the estimated 1.18 million hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 76% AFK, and 24% WNH.

COGHILL DISTRICT: Waters of the Coghill District, **excluding the WNH HEEZ**, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 7; Thursday, August 8; and Friday, August 9. **The WNH HEEZ consists of the waters of the SHA north of a latitude line at 60° 47.78' N.** Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Coghill District CPFs include 282,000 on August 1; 135,000 on August 2; 239,000 on August 3; 579,000 on August 4. There were 269 purse seine and 245 gillnet deliveries reported for these periods.

EASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Eastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 7; Thursday, August 8; and Friday, August 9. Waters of Port Valdez east of 146° 23.00' W Long., will be closed to commercial fishing during these periods. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Eastern District CPFs include 441,000 on August 1, with 35 deliveries; 199,000 on August 2, with 22 deliveries; 263,000 on August 3, with 20 deliveries; 161,000 on August 4, with 14 deliveries.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: Waters of the Montague District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 7; Thursday, August 8; and Friday, August 9. Pink salmon harvest estimates for Montague District CPFs on August 2 and 3 are confidential. There were no harvests reported for the August 1 or August 4 Montague District CPFs.

NORTHERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the CCH SHA and THA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 7; Thursday, August 8; and Friday, August 9. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Northern District CPFs include 875,000 on August 1, with 78 deliveries; 761,000 on August 2, with 57 deliveries; 574,000 on August 3, with 48 deliveries; 1.06 million on August 4, with 67 deliveries.

NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 7; Thursday, August 8; and Friday, August 9. There were no harvests reported for the August 1 through August 4 Northwestern District CPFs.

SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 7; Thursday, August 8; and Friday, August 9. Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Southeastern District CPFs include 174,000 on August 1, with 21 deliveries; 105,000 on August 2, with 11 deliveries; 95,700 on August 3, with 10 deliveries. Pink salmon harvest numbers for the August 4 Southeastern District CPF are confidential.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding the AFK Hatchery OUTER HEEZ**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for a 14-hour fishing period beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Wednesday, August 7. The outer HEEZ consists of the waters of the SHA west and south of a line from 60° 03.398' N. lat., 148° 03.326' W. long. to 60° 03.017' N. lat., 148° 02.547' W. long.

Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding the AFK Hatchery OUTER HEEZ**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Thursday, August 8, and Friday, August 9. **Waters north of the latitude of Squire Point and west of the longitude of Herring Point will be CLOSED to commercial fishing during the AUGUST 8 AND AUGUST 9 periods. These waters are being closed to allow for passage of Eshamy Lake sockeye salmon.** Pink salmon harvest estimates for recent Southwestern District CPFs include 1.82 million on August 1, with 135 deliveries; 1.65 million on August 2, with 129 deliveries; 1.20 million on August 3, with 96 deliveries; 1.38 million on August 4, with 102 deliveries.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to occur by 2:00 pm Friday, August 9.

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time in season either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, in season harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing.

However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species). Under the ESA, take means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” 16 U.S.C. 1532(19); and harass means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.